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Security Council

Fifty-fourth Year Year

Provisional

4081st Meeting

Wednesday, 15 December 1999, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Hain	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Dosari
	Brazil	Mr. Fonseca
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation in Africa

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Africa

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belgium, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria), Mr. Moore (Bahamas), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Adam (Belgium), Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi), Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon), Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia), Mr. Mwamba Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Ms. Rasi (Finland), Mr. Kastrup (Germany), Mr. Osei (Ghana), Mr. Sharma (India), Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia), Mr. Ryan (Ireland), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Mr. Takasu (Japan), Mr. Kuindwa (Kenya), Mr. Babaa (Libyan Arab Jamahirya), Mr. Santos (Mozambique), Mr. Powles (New Zealand), Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria), Mr. Kolby (Norway), Mr. Montiero (Portugal), Mr. Lee See-young (Republic of Korea), Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda), Mr. Kamara (Sierra Leone), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Arias (Spain), Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda), Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine), Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Muchetwa (Zimbabwe) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Allow me, in my capacity as Council President, to make a few introductory remarks.

The Council and the wider United Nations membership have accepted the need to respond better to the challenges that Africa presents. The Secretary-General's report last year analysed the problems and, in response, there have been a number of Council debates and texts, but these have not always produced concrete action or concrete results. So we want today to focus on practical and operational ways to make a difference to Africa's problems and to help Africa's renaissance.

I want today's discussion to be a genuine exchange of ideas and views. Hence the innovative step of holding an active discussion in this Chamber, avoiding some of the usual time-consuming formalities. This is why we are also urging all speakers to confine their initial contributions to a maximum of five minutes, and I will try to obey that rule myself. If we all stick to this limit, there will be a chance to come back later and respond to what has been said by others so that we can create a more free-flowing and constructive discussion around, I suggest, three key questions.

First, how can we improve coordination and cooperation between the Security Council, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the key subregional organizations, including coordination of joint activity on specific issues? Secondly, how can we meet the needs for African peacekeeping more effectively and more quickly? Thirdly, what additional instruments can we, as the Council, bring to bear to help solve and, where possible, prevent conflicts in Africa?

Once all the speakers have been heard, I propose to call on as many as there is time for who wish to speak again. At the end of the day, I intend to sum up briefly and draw some conclusions. To open the discussion, I am delighted to call on the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: Mr. President, let me welcome you to Headquarters today.

May I first say how much I appreciate the sustained attention which both the Council and the General Assembly are giving to African issues. If meetings alone could solve Africa's problems we would have none, but, alas, they do not, which is why I appreciate even more,

Mr. President, the effort you have made to give this meeting a practical and operational character, aimed at making a difference not just in words but in action. As I told the General Assembly last week, the United Nations could hardly be any more broadly engaged in Africa than it is already. What we need now is to be engaged more effectively.

I also believe you are right, Mr. President, to focus, in the first instance, on the need for better coordination between the Council and regional and subregional organizations. This is particularly important in the area of peacekeeping.

During this decade peacekeeping has acquired a strong regional dimension virtually everywhere it has been practised. Asians took the lead in Cambodia, as they did again in East Timor. Similarly, in Bosnia and Kosovo peacekeeping has been seen primarily as a task for Europeans.

It is only natural that African States are expected to play a leading role in their own back yards, and in many instances they have risen bravely to the challenge. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) especially has made heroic efforts in the extraordinarily difficult circumstances in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

What is not natural, or indeed fair, is to expect Africans to carry out these tasks without help. Even the Europeans, who are better equipped in so many respects, have had significant help from others in keeping the peace within their region.

A region such as Africa is therefore even more entitled to expect help in strengthening the capacity of its regional and subregional institutions. This was a need which I highlighted in my report last year.

We in the Secretariat are doing what we can. We have intensified our own cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and are working especially closely with them in helping implement the Lusaka accord on the Democratic Republic of Congo. If the results have so far been disappointing, that is partly for lack of a clear will to implement the accord among the parties. But it is also a question of resources. In these circumstances there is always a tendency for ceasefires to break down and for the region to slide back into war. That is why the most immediate and practical decision I am looking for from the Council is to act promptly in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, before the fragile ceasefire is further eroded.

But it is no less urgent that necessary resources be made available to the Joint Military Commission to enable it to play the role foreseen for it under the Lusaka accord. We have already convened two meetings with potential donors to highlight this need. We should now explore jointly with the OAU how we can make the Joint Military Commission more effective and align it more closely with the work of the peacekeepers.

The same observation applies to the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which has done invaluable work in West Africa — notably in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. But, at least in the two former cases, it has had to rely heavily on support from individual States in the region — States whose peoples can ill afford such sacrifices. The Council should consider as a matter of urgency how such regional operations can be more fairly and efficiently financed. Indeed, I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of ensuring that wherever responsibility is assigned, adequate resources are also provided to carry out that responsibility.

In the case of Sierra Leone I should like to emphasize that, as indicated in previous reports to the Council, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) will require additional resources if ECOMOG confirms its expressed intention to withdraw all its troops from the country.

Regional and subregional organizations in Africa simply do not have those resources at present. They are obliged to finance their peacekeeping activities through trust funds and, regrettably, these trust funds do not attract donations on anything like the scale needed.

The United Nations itself is not much better placed when, as is now so often the case, we are told to finance our operations through voluntary contributions. I believe the increasing resort to this practice is contrary to the spirit of the Charter, and it is also inefficient. No organization can consistently deliver quality performance if it is obliged to live from hand to mouth. It should be one of the highest priorities of the Council to find better and more efficient ways of funding peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President, you asked what additional instruments the Council can bring to bear to help solve

and, where possible, to prevent conflicts in Africa. In suggesting a few such instruments, I have in mind particularly the need for the Council to show sustained and effective interest in African conflicts, or potential conflicts, and to avoid giving the appearance of sporadic or purely rhetorical reactions to crises without any follow-up. It is vital that once the Council has taken an initiative or adopted a resolution it remains fully engaged in following up and supporting its implementation.

One way of doing this would be to use contact groups of interested members that would undertake to follow through on proposed action on specific conflicts. A start has been made with the group established for Somalia.

In some cases it may be appropriate to establish a joint working group, bringing together members of the Council, the Secretariat and the relevant regional or subregional organization. This would be especially suitable, perhaps, when there is a need to ensure that decisions such as the deployment of peacekeeping troops are implemented with a minimum of delay.

A third kind of working group that can be useful is one that brings together members that are interested in a particular aspect of conflict prevention or containment and that would accept a specific mandate to work with the Secretariat in following up some of the Council's initiatives, with a clearly defined outcome in view. The model here would be Ambassador Fowler's group, which has done excellent work tracking the economic resources that fuel certain conflicts and which is looking for ways to enforce sanctions and embargoes once the Council has decided on them. Other problems, such as the traffic in small arms, would surely merit the same approach.

Fourthly, the Council could consider holding meetings — perhaps alternately here at Headquarters and, in appropriate cases, in Africa — to establish closer and more regular contact between the members of the Council and the heads and staff of various regional and subregional organizations.

In addition to these, I believe many of the ideas that emerged from last month's debate on conflict prevention may be particularly useful in Africa — for instance, missions with clear goals undertaken by the Council itself on the model of the mission to Jakarta and Dili last September; preventive action by the Council in response to matters brought to its attention by States or by the Secretary-General, including, in some cases, preventive deployment of forces with the consent of the host country; preventive disarmament or the establishment of demilitarized zones; and the improvement of regional capacities for early warning, as well as peacekeeping.

The suggestions I have made are not dramatic. But they could, if implemented consistently over time, make a real and perceptible difference in the quality of our work for peace and security in Africa. I offer them in the practical, down-to-earth spirit in which you, Mr. President, have convened this meeting. I look forward with great interest to hearing your own comments and suggestions, as well as those of other Council members.

The President: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary-General for the practical suggestions that you made, which are very welcome indeed to achieve the action that we need in Africa, rather than simply the words and resolutions that we have all become accustomed to.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom.

How do we build a real partnership between the United Nations and Africa? First of all, we need a better partnership between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The United Nations and the OAU should not be competing, but should instead be looking for cooperation and for synergy. We need regular consultation between the Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the OAU's Secretary-General and Chairman. We need more joint United Nations/OAU envoys, an idea that, of course, was floated by the Secretary-General in his Africa report. We need better coordination in New York between the Council, on the one hand, and the OAU office and the African Group, on the other; and better coordination at Addis Ababa between the OAU and representatives of the Council on the ground. I propose today that the Security Council should establish a mechanism to work with the OAU to consider how to take forward these and other practical ideas, including those suggested by the Secretary-General for improved consultation.

Secondly, we need better prevention so that African problems do not turn into conflicts, as so often, sadly, they have done. Britain would welcome periodic reporting from the Secretary-General providing early warning for the Council on situations of growing

concern and recommendations for action. We want to enhance the Security Council's capacity to monitor and assess potential trouble spots. We should consider Security Council missions to the region. We should be more ready to consider preventive deployments, and we should consider what more we can all do to help boost the OAU's own conflict-prevention capacity. Britain is already, of course, providing support to the OAU's Conflict Prevention Centre in Addis Ababa.

Thirdly, we need much better peacekeeping, and your remarks, Mr. Secretary-General, about the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone were especially welcome. We need better peacekeeping when prevention fails. Why did it take six months to get a United Nations force moving into Sierra Leone after the Peace Agreement? Why were advance preparations for a possible peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo so difficult?

This is not a criticism of the Secretary-General or the Secretariat. It is a criticism of all of us. The Secretary-General and his team must have our full political support for new peacekeeping operations, when necessary, with the right resources, money and people, to make this happen much more successfully than we have been able to do.

The Secretariat needs larger stocks of key equipment, ready for rapid deployment, and structures and processes for delivering quick, effective action.

Fourthly, we must have much better enforcement of Council decisions, including smarter sanctions. For instance, the United Nations — and by that I mean United Nations Member States — has failed to enforce agreed sanctions resolutions in Angola to stop supplies of fuel, arms and munitions to Savimbi's murderous UNITA forces. We applaud Ambassador Fowler's groundbreaking work, but he needs practical help, including intelligence and information from many Governments represented here today, including Britain's.

I have discussed with the United States, French, Belgian and Ukrainian Governments, and many African nations, the need to act now. After the recent military defeat Savimbi has suffered, now is the time to make sanctions bite. Far too many corrupt Government officials in the region are collaborating with supplies to, and diamond sales from, UNITA. Arms are coming in from Eastern Europe. It is time that those responsible were named and shamed. Let us work together to do so.

I also urge all diamond companies and trading centres to follow DeBeers' lead and refuse to take diamonds from Angola.

With decisive action now, the United Nations can end the war in Angola and promote a lasting peace. This will be a real test of the United Nations willingness to put Africa much higher on the international community's agenda, as we in Britain want it to be. That is why I shall listen keenly to today's discussions, and at the end we will draw out key points from it for the Security Council to consider as a basis for new action.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We would like at the outset to welcome the convening of today's meeting and to thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I should like to comment briefly on the questions we are discussing today.

First, on the improvement of the relationship and coordination between the Security Council and the regional and subregional organizations, we believe that the Security Council should take more concrete action to support the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. We support the work of all of those regional and subregional organizations.

Secondly, we believe that in considering issues involving hot spots, we could, in the relevant resolutions and presidential statements, welcome the regional organization concerned and approve or authorize it to carry out the relevant work.

Thirdly, efforts should be made to strengthen the relationship between the Security Council and the OAU. Consideration could be given to the possibility of inviting the Secretary-General of the OAU, or his representative, to give regular briefings to the Security Council.

Fourthly, following OAU summit or ministerial meetings, we could invite the Chairman for that month to brief the Council as appropriate.

The second issue I would like to comment on is how to carry out peacekeeping operations in Africa in a more timely and effective manner. First, we believe that the general principles are obvious — that is to say, we should abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and also by the three principles of neutrality, self-defence and prior consent of the parties concerned. These are the three principles that must guide us.

Secondly, we believe that, with regard to peacekeeping operations in Africa, the views of the countries concerned, the relevant regional organizations and the Secretariat should be sought beforehand. When a decision is taken, the lack of guarantees for security on the ground cannot be used as a pretext for taking a negative approach.

Thirdly, we believe that a lack of resources has gravely impeded the normal functioning of peacekeeping operations. We therefore call upon the countries that are in arrears for assessed peacekeeping contributions to pay their arrears in full in a prompt and unconditional manner.

Fourthly, with regard to the peacekeeping operations carried out in Sierra Leone, the reaction of the Security Council was not prompt. The Council was also hesitant in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All this has given rise to a great deal of suspicion about double standards. We believe that the key here is whether the necessary political will can be mustered.

The third question I would like to comment on relates to the additional instruments that the Security Council could use in order to better prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa. We believe that, generally speaking, the Security Council must find new means in order to improve its work.

First, let us recall that the Security Council dispatched a mission to East Timor last September to investigate the situation on the ground. This was well received by all of the parties concerned. We believe that the Security Council could also dispatch similar missions to the relevant regions in Africa in order to carry our a study of the situation on the ground.

Secondly, we believe that the Security Council should make increased efforts to tap the potential of existing mechanisms and resources. For instance, the sanctions Committees could play an enhanced role in this regard. The manner in which Ambassador Fowler, Chairman of the sanctions Committee on Angola, has conducted the affairs of that Committee merits our attention and consideration.

Thirdly, we believe that African conflicts have very complex causes and that efforts should therefore be made to deal with both the symptoms and root causes in a balanced manner. Following the fulfilment by peacekeeping operations of their mandates, other relevant bodies within the United Nations system should take over promptly and play their proper role in the building of peace. The Security Council should therefore further strengthen its exchanges and cooperation with other relevant United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

We believe that today's discussion is a very good beginning. There is an old Chinese saying that a journey of a thousand miles must start with the first step.

The President: I very grateful to the Ambassador of China for setting an example on brevity. I am told that my own contribution lasted 4 minutes and 55 seconds, and so came within the five-minute limit.

The next speaker is the Ambassador of the United States. As a son of Africa myself, I am delighted to say that he has just returned from Africa. Everybody who visits Africa comes back a better person, and I am sure that that applies to him, too.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I will try to follow your five-minute rule, Sir. I apologize for leaving the meeting briefly, but I believe it was necessary — indeed, essential — for me to speak in the General Assembly on the passing of President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia.

I want to praise the United Kingdom for calling this important meeting, and to say that I have just returned from a trip to Mali, Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Rwanda, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Niger. I look forward to discussing issues relating to the Congo in more detail at tomorrow's meeting.

I should like to make a few brief observations in the spirit of informality which the President has so correctly imposed on us today. The number one problem that we encountered on our trip — the number one problem that Africa must deal with, among all the other problems that we are here to discuss — is the question of the spread of HIV/AIDS. I cannot stress enough how serious it is. The

Secretary-General has boldly and courageously been headlining this issue for many years. Indeed, it was Kofi Annan, personally, who asked me to take a look at this issue a long time ago. I am grateful to him for making that request.

I must say, here in the Security Council, that this is not just a health issue: it is a security issue and it is an economic issue. It is an issue that will not go away. In the past 12 months, more than 10 times as many people have died of AIDS in Africa as from all the wars in that great continent. We cannot turn away from it; it is a legitimate part of our discussions here in the Security Council.

It is the destigmatization of AIDS that needs to be dealt with most vigorously. Of the 10 countries we visited, I felt that only one — Uganda — was fully on board on destigmatization. I am told that Senegal, too, has done an excellent job. Every other country we visited acknowledged the problem and had programmes to deal with it. Indeed, President Mbeki was wearing the AIDS ribbon when I met with him. We are concerned about this issue, and I hope to address it further next month when the United States holds the presidency of the Council.

I should like to refer to the wars of Africa. I will reserve comment about the Democratic Republic of the Congo until tomorrow. On Burundi, we are delighted that President Mandela is taking over the effort. I had an extremely good talk with him on this issue, and I think he will make a real difference. On Angola, we, like Ambassador Qin Huasun, look forward to working closely with Ambassador Fowler in the sanctions Committee. For our part, the United States is going to redouble its efforts on sanctions, and we look forward to learning more from Ambassador Fowler about how the United States can better contribute to this effort.

In closing, let me say that, as the Secretary-General said, much more attention is required in the Security Council on Africa. I share his view that it should be effective. I strongly endorse the proposal made by Ambassador Qin Huasun, on behalf of the People's Republic of China, that the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity spend more time consulting the Security Council.

Finally, I should like to say a word about the American presidency next month. As we announced in a speech in Pretoria, the United States will use the opportunity provided by the American presidency next month — the first month of the new millennium — to emphasize Africa. Our tentative intention is to build on this important meeting today and on the meeting tomorrow, and to hold, particularly in the latter part of January, an intense series of public and private Security Council meetings that will focus heavily on the problems of the area — those that I have just mentioned, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an issue which I look forward to addressing further tomorrow. I hope that high-level representatives from capitals will join us for those discussions next month, and that they will involve real achievements, not just talk.

Thank you, Mr. President, for calling this important meeting.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of the United States of America, and welcome the points he made. I also congratulate his Government on the attention that it will be giving Africa during its presidency next month. I think Africa is now getting more attention, for the right reasons, than it perhaps has ever had. We need to make something of that.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): It is, indeed, a pleasure to see you here, Mr. President, participating in this important debate. The commitment of your country and Government, and your own personal commitment, to Africa, is well known and deeply appreciated around this table. On a more personal note, I should also like to thank you for your support, both moral and material, for our efforts to bring the civil war in Angola to an early conclusion through the effective application of Security Council sanctions. Your call for specific and focused action is welcome.

As you, Sir, are well aware — although some in the Chamber may not be — it is my intention, as Chairman of the Angola sanctions Committee, to submit on time, by the end of February, the report of the expert group established by the Council, and to see it presented to the Council in March or early April. I very much hope that it will contain very focused recommendations for additional action that the Council may take to do exactly as you proposed.

Canada is particularly grateful that you, Sir, have agreed to a format today that will allow the participation of non-members in this innovative discussion. The Council can only benefit by exploring fresh approaches to conducting its work, and this, indeed, is one. We very much share the concern that, while Africa absorbs a significant percentage of the Council's time, we have, in

fact, achieved rather little in terms of concrete results. Too often, for a combination of financial and political reasons, the Council has contrived to avoid a great deal of its responsibility for maintaining peace and security in Africa. The result has been a devolution of responsibility for conflict prevention, mediation and resolution to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and to subregional organizations, often with little regard for their respective capacities in those areas. Even when such organizations can play an effective role, prevention efforts conducted at local or regional level frequently need the impetus that only active Council engagement can give. Our focus must therefore be on effective partnerships based on a realistic understanding of each other's relative strengths and weaknesses, an efficient division of labour and equitable burden-sharing.

Not all of the news is bad. The recent authorization of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, which received a robust mandate to protect civilians, and, eventually, to take on some of the burdens now shouldered by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was, we believe, a step in the right direction. But from our perspective, we still came up with a hybrid solution, with attendant confusion and inconsistencies inherent in the relationship between the United Nations force and the remaining ECOMOG elements. We must continue to work harder for clearer mandates and less confusion.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the involvement of the United Nations is an important signal of the Council's commitment to peace efforts there, and it should help create — or at least facilitate and build — the confidence required to underpin the eventual deployment of a reasonably sized and effective United Nations mission to oversee the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. I would certainly agree with previous speakers that we have waited too long in that regard.

Given the growing importance of the work of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on peace and security, closer cooperation is indeed needed between the Council and the OAU. Practical proposals include more frequent contacts between the Council President and the Secretary-General or Chairman of the OAU, and more regular meetings between the Council and OAU representatives in New York.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations becomes more important upon the expiry of a Council-mandated mission, as these organizations are called on to assume the leading role in post-conflict peace-building and reconstruction. We welcome the initiatives already undertaken by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the OAU aimed at increasing the level of cooperation between the two bodies, particularly regarding the exchange of information on key African issues. We are pleased to encourage the two Secretaries-General to continue their coordinating efforts, and the recommendations we have just heard from Secretary-General Annan and from you, Mr. President, are welcome in this regard; Canada looks forward to cooperating in whatever way we can to give substance and moment to those proposals.

It is important to emphasize that no amount of United Nations collaboration with regional or subregional organizations will make peace possible if the parties to an agreement do not fulfil their obligations or if they resist efforts to establish a workable peace.

Too often, the window of opportunity for international engagement closes quickly, and the chance for peace is tragically lost. We need to improve the capacity of the United Nations to plan, deploy and manage peace-support operations. When a political decision is taken to respond to a situation — not only in Africa — there must be a commensurate ability to act. Increasing that capacity includes improving the ability of the United Nations to deploy forces rapidly, something which Canada has been working hard for over six years to achieve, and without any success.

We also want to ensure that African peace-support operations are matched with appropriate mandates and resources. Failure to do this in the past has had disastrous consequences. Mandates must be sufficiently robust to give a realistic chance for mission success, and therefore they must be adequately funded and supported. Voluntary trust funds established for such purposes do not work, and I hope we will soon come to terms with that reality. They are not appropriate to the task. Multinational forces are not equitable in the burden they place on a small number of countries. Our collective experience in Sierra Leone amply demonstrates this. We have a system that works: United Nations missions funded through assessed contributions. Let us use it.

The Security Council should also consider preventive deployments in Africa. As noted in the recent presidential statement on conflict prevention, such preventive action can be more cost-effective than

measures taken in the aftermath of a conflict. The Secretary-General, of course, was remarkably eloquent in this regard in his statement to the General Assembly of 20 September 1999. The Council should give careful consideration to early warning indicators and should be prepared to act before armed conflict breaks out. We support the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to establish a working group, and we look forward to working with it.

The challenge is not so much one of seeking new instruments, but of making existing ones work more effectively. An effective conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution strategy requires a broader definition of security and of challenges to security, one which takes into account the multiple factors that contribute to conflict and which addresses conflict in its earliest stages and manifestations. Such a definition implies our focusing our attention in the Council not only on aggression between States but also on intra-State security issues, which include gross and systematic human rights abuses, catastrophic humanitarian emergencies, failures of governance and the rule of law, and economic deprivation. In short, it means paying greater attention to threats to human security, which, as recent history shows, have been a key source of conflict in Africa.

Canada believes that rapid and resolute action to resolve and end conflicts can be an important deterrent against future conflicts. To achieve such a goal, the Council must be able to count on a United Nations that is capable of deploying effectively and rapidly. The Council must therefore explore the deterrent qualities of its available instruments. Existing sanctions must be made to work, and members will not be surprised to hear me include those against UNITA. Africans are not selling arms to UNITA, and Africans are not buying Mr. Savimbi's diamonds. However, Africans have a key role to play in making travel and representation sanctions effective.

The President: I thank Ambassador Fowler for the work he is doing on Angola. This is a critical time for making sure that sanctions against UNITA are biting and that they are effective.

Let me say also that I have just been passed a note saying that Ambassador Holbrooke spoke for 4 minutes 57 seconds. Obviously, stopwatches are becoming just as prevalent as mobile phones in the Security Council. The discipline is admirable.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the United Kingdom delegation for organizing this discussion during its presidency of the Council.

There is no single prescription for all the crises and conflicts in Africa. But we can draw some conclusions and learn some lessons from our experiences.

First of all, as most other speakers have already said, there should be improved relations between the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations or indeed ad hoc regional initiatives. In the past, the Security Council has not always been kept adequately informed about certain regional initiatives; there is recourse to the Council only in the latter stages of dealing with a matter, leaving it insufficiently prepared to give its endorsement or to make recommendations. The chairmen or secretaries-general of organizations or ad hoc committees that are engaged in negotiations ought to meet more often with the Council, and the Council ought to invite them at key stages of a peace process in which they are engaged. This, of course, would apply first and foremost to the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

On the other hand, States that have the resources should provide financial and logistical support to regional or subregional organizations and to ad hoc coalitions when these are engaged in a peacekeeping operation. What was done for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Sierra Leone and in Guinea-Bissau was inadequate. I fully agree with Ambassador Fowler's comment that assessed financing for peacekeeping operations is preferable to voluntary financing.

But the best way to help Africans solve their problems is, first of all, to train them for peacekeeping. That is the purpose of programmes undertaken by a number of countries, including France. And we must help them to prepare and implement those operations.

The second approach is direct United Nations action, which would answer the criticism that the Organization does too little too late. First of all, the United Nations must prepare itself to act rapidly. The United Nations should be able to consider the means to launch an operation in good time. The Security Council attempted this for the first time with the adoption of resolution 1279 (1999), on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which requests the Secretary-General

> "to take the administrative steps necessary for the equipping of up to 500 United Nations military observers with a view to facilitating future rapid United Nations deployments". (*resolution 1279 (1999), para. 9*)

For the first time, we agreed, finally, to prepare in advance. We should continue on this track. One cannot on the one hand, deplore the slowness of the United Nations response and on the other reject all innovation.

Secondly, it is obvious that we should ensure that the resources of an operation are in line with its mandate. To whittle down the format, the components or the budget of United Nations operation is the best way to ensure failure. The financial dimension must not become a constraint that determines everything else. When we are dealing with the maintenance of peace and security, the cost should be an outcome and not a determining factor, and the most enthusiastic declaration of intentions is worth nothing in the face of stinginess on the part of States.

Thirdly, the best way to resolve conflicts is obviously to try to prevent them. We had a debate two weeks ago on this subject. Preventing conflicts requires many actions that very often are not within the purview of this Council. In the political sphere, we should promote the idea of genuine power sharing, which protects the rights of minorities and thereby avoids a vicious circle of seizure of power or political or ethnic revenge. It is up to all of us, Member States, organizations and donors, to send the same message about the appropriateness of having power sharing accepted.

In the economic sphere we must maintain a meaningful level of assistance for development, along with what is being done in the area of trade. Three quarters of the least developed countries are located in Africa, and there are no miracles — they have to be helped. The requirements for official development assistance remain substantial. I would agree with what was said by the representative of the United States regarding the campaign against AIDS. But this campaign against AIDS, in terms both of prevention and of treatment, also requires assistance. It requires solidarity, meaning funds for giving treatment.

All of these recommendations will serve no purpose, obviously, if we do not apply them in concrete cases. Many crises in Africa are at a critical stage. Many of them have been on the agenda of the Council for several months, if not several years: the Great Lakes, Sierra Leone, Angola, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea and, obviously, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Decisions in the weeks to come on all of these topics — and I would like to emphasize the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo — will show the extent of any real resonance of the words uttered today.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to welcome you most warmly on behalf of the Government and the people of Argentina. I am certain that under your guidance this debate will be extremely useful for the pursuit of the objectives that have been set. We remember your words when you were with us for the open debate at the end of September. We know that you are a man who was born in Africa and who struggled for the freedom of Africa and that in your current position as Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs you will continue to pursue those objectives vigorously.

This debate should enable us to think about three specific things: first of all, cooperation between the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organizations; secondly, strengthening Africa's capacity in the area of peacekeeping; and thirdly, conflict prevention.

With regard to the first point, I would say that it is essential to maintain regular dialogue between the two Secretariats, not only at the decision-making level, but also in the area of preparation for decision-making. It is not sufficient just to have an exchange of information; there must also be, above all, an exchange of the analysis of that information. There are various ways of putting this into effect: exchange of visits, exchange of participation of officials in meetings and more frequent presentations by high-ranking OAU officials in private meetings, open briefings and open meetings of the Council.

The presence of President Chiluba of Zambia last September, for example, at the open meeting of the Council on the Democratic Republic of the Congo was extremely significant. Similarly, we believe that it would be positive to have the presence of President Nelson Mandela with respect to Burundi. We should explore all possible mechanisms available under Chapter VIII of the Charter.

With respect to the second point, we believe that there are two aspects: training of peacekeepers and logistical and financial support — in other words,

resources. This is where, in our view, the greatest difficulties lie. The lack of resources is what determines, to a certain extent, the conduct, duration and the composition of peacekeeping operations. Voluntary contributions and trust funds are important, but they cannot replace the regular funding of peacekeeping operations. Only regular funding gives peacekeeping operations the necessary legitimacy, continuity and predictability. The Secretary-General has noted this on various occasions, and we have heard this from Ambassador Fowler of Canada with particular emphasis just now.

Lastly, with respect to conflict prevention, we believe that there are various instruments that the Council could keep in mind — for example, improving the early warning system. This relates to the first point also — exchange of information and analysis of information with the OAU and main subregional organizations. Another instrument is the application of sanctions, even, if necessary, when the conflict is in its early stages. We should bear in mind that the civilian population that is the primary victim of the conflict should not also be the victim of sanctions. Imposing a sanctions regime is, in itself, not enough; it must be made effective. In this regard, the practical initiatives taken by Ambassador Fowler of Canada as Chairman of the Sanctions Committee on Angola are a clear example of how to enhance the effectiveness of the sanctions regime. In our view, fact-finding missions carried out by the Secretary-General and missions of the Security Council are instruments that should be used more frequently. Lastly, the establishment of demilitarized zones as a result of fact-finding missions can also be a useful instrument.

No diplomatic instrument will be effective if we fail to understand that at the root of conflicts there are social and economic problems. We reiterate that peace and development are two sides of the same coin. The United States and France have just spoken about this. The end of the cold war created conditions conducive to economic relations. However, as the Secretary-General has pointed out, the economy is global, while politics are local. The disheartening result of the Seattle summit is an indication of resistance towards trade liberalization that takes into account the needs of developing countries. Hence the need for coordination between the Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, together with the other bodies of the system and the Bretton Woods institutions, not merely in the transition from peacekeeping to peace-building, but in the prevention stage. The experience of Haiti offers some useful lessons to be applied to African issues, even in the cases of the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

In conclusion, it is a fact that no conflict will be solved without genuine political will on the part of the leaders to find political, and not military, solutions. But it is also a fact that a clear resolve on the part of the Council is essential in order to make specific contributions to the solution of such conflicts.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina, particularly for his remarks about my own commitments on Africa.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): It is good to see the British presidency devote an open Council meeting to Africa. When we planned a similar meeting for our presidency in September we were not at all sure it would be a success. After all, non-permanent members, who get to chair the Security Council once or twice in a generation, are always a bit apprehensive about what they organize. Precisely because their presidency is such a rare occurrence, the pressure to turn it into something spectacular is intense, and under those circumstances it is easy to get it wrong.

Against that background, we find it very reassuring that the two permanent members which, by virtue of the alphabet are called upon to chair the Security Council just before and just after the turn of the century have both decided to devote open meetings to Africa. Apparently we did not get it wrong when we set this trend in September. As a matter of fact, future presidencies will have some explaining to do when they do not devote an open meeting to Africa.

Some African delegations will welcome this development, but others are bound to regard it as a sham, a substitute for the effective involvement that Africa so desperately needs. Our African colleagues have not yet spoken, but my hunch is that this is what some of them would like to say, and would say if they were sufficiently straightforward. Next door, in our informal consultations, we have heard plenty of statements to that effect. I hope I am abiding by the rules you have set for this meeting, Mr. President. This is an open debate, so we may react, but we may also pre-empt.

The notorious double standard, which is supposedly practised by us, is a big problem, and I would like to make a few observations about it.

First, we agree with the French delegation that political engagement is not enough; funding remains a crucial factor. The Netherlands puts its money where its mouth is. We are spending a lot of money on Kosovo, but our total contribution to Africa has not been affected. What is going to Kosovo is new money. There has not been any diversion in the flow of Dutch funds destined for Africa.

Secondly, there is no slackening in our involvement in African projects that are of special interest to the Security Council, such as our contributions to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Sierra Leone and to the Arusha process in Burundi.

Thirdly, we feel that we cannot really be blamed for our involvement in Kosovo. The former Yugoslavia is our backyard, and our security is at stake in that part of the world. Due to globalization, however, ever more Dutchmen are beginning to see Africa as their region as well. The days when humanitarian catastrophes in Africa were faraway occurrences that did not immediately affect us are definitely over.

But those who claim that the international community stands ready to intervene in Kosovo and East Timor, while it ignores the African continent, overlook two facts. The first is that the United Nations has deployed more peacekeeping operations in Africa than in any other single region. Of the 32 operations launched between 1989 and 1998, 13 were deployed in Africa. This is probably known to most people in this room, but some may argue that these 13 peacekeeping operations cannot match the scale, speed and cost of the actions in Kosovo and East Timor. Actions of that magnitude are apparently only possible in Europe or in Asia.

We appreciate this argument, but we must point out — and this is the second point that tends to be overlooked — that Kosovo and East Timor are far from the norm for collective action in both Europe and Asia. The air strikes against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were launched without a specific Security Council mandate, and even the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries that participated in them express the hope that in future such actions can be avoided. It is hard to imagine that the parliaments in the 16 NATO countries would have given the green light for these air strikes if they had not witnessed eight years of "ethnic cleansing" at the hands of Milosevic, first in the Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, then in Bosnia and finally in Kosovo. It was a unique case of political will generated by accumulated revulsion.

The East Timor case was not typical either. After many years of stalemate, the international community had been greatly relieved that Indonesia, Portugal and the United Nations had finally negotiated a settlement. The anticlimax was all the greater when it then turned out that elements in the Indonesian armed forces did not hesitate to violate the agreement when the East Timorese seemed to opt for independence. Moreover, the 5 May Agreement was curiously flawed in that it left the responsibility for law and order with Indonesia, even in the case of a ballot in favour of independence. At any rate, the determining factor was that a neighbouring country was ready to lead the humanitarian intervention.

These constitute exceptional circumstances that facilitated the actions concerned. In other cases there may well be circumstances that make such actions more difficult. In Africa this may be a lack of central authority or inter-ethnic strife. Ethnic rivalry is an exceptionally intractable problem. Europe has its share of experience with it, too, but over the years the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has had some successes in combating it.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) took a historic decision when in 1963 it decided to accept the boundaries that African States had inherited from colonial authorities. This has left Africa with secure borders, but also with ethnically heterogeneous States. It is not for a European delegation to tell the OAU what it could do, but a logical sequel to the 1963 decision might be to help devise workable African models of multi-ethnicity. Such assistance would not be interference in the domestic affairs of its members, but an essential complement to the doctrine of inviolable borders. This would seem a legitimate suggestion in light of the fact that almost all the conflicts in Africa rage within sovereign States.

The President: The Netherlands' designation during its presidency of a day of debate on Africa was most welcome, and the United Kingdom particularly appreciated the fact that its Prime Minister took time from his busy schedule to come and chair that debate. That was a concrete sign of the Netherlands Government's commitment to addressing African problems.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, in the chair, presiding over this meeting of the Council. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the United Kingdom delegation for organizing this meeting in a very novel format.

I may have taken the advice of the United Kingdom delegation too well to heart, in that as I have not prepared any notes. I am supposed to be direct, but I may be running the risk of not being very articulate on some matters. I merely jotted down some points after listening to you, Mr. President, the Secretary-General and those of my colleagues who have spoken before me. Then I realized that this is an open meeting after all, and what one says is in a sense official. I will try, nevertheless, on the basis of my notes to contribute to the discussion.

I agree entirely with what I have heard so far in this meeting. Many of the points have been made before, but there are some new angles, which we appreciate very much. What is needed is more follow-up by us, by the Secretariat and by the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

What I will do is to raise some questions, even though some may already have been raised by my colleagues who preceded me.

My first question is whether there is a sufficient or adequate flow or exchange of information between the two organizations. We have discussed this before, but I raise it again because from time to time some Council members have the notion that we, the Council, do not know exactly what Africa wants of us. There is this miscommunication.

Is the Council doing too much or too little? Are we hanging back from intervening in African affairs or are we being too intrusive? This has been asked, and the problem that arises is one of selectivity sometimes perceived by some members of the Council, particularly the African members, some Asian members and others. We may feel that, perhaps because of this miscommunication, there is this perceived lack of interest — genuine interest — in African affairs and that the Council is being selective. It intervenes in some areas, but not in others. Is it because Africa is too big, because there are too many problems in Africa — of course, funding is a problem, too — or is it because the issues have been there for so long and are unresolved?

These are some of the issues that have been raised and I think they contribute to this misperception between the Council and the OAU. I would appreciate it if some of the questions that I and other friends have raised here could be responded to by my African colleagues in particular, because what they say here has an important bearing.

As far as my delegation is concerned, we have no misunderstanding of this. We think that Africa has sent out a clear message, although some other members have felt that the message has not been too clear as to whether the United Nations is invited in or not invited to the full extent. We feel that the message has been very clear, but that what is lacking on the part of the Organization is follow-up and deep involvement.

Then, of course, there is the question of Somalia and the perception that, having had its fingers burnt some years ago, there is a shyness, a reticence, on the part of the Council to rush back into helping resolve the problem. From the perspective of Asia, we think that the time has come for the Council to re-engage in Somalia and other places in Africa, and that one can only learn from the lessons of the past. Mistakes have been made, perhaps — we learn from the mistakes. I think the United Nations Secretariat has ample documentation on lessons learned from past mistakes.

As far as Malaysia is concerned, I do not think that Africa would believe the involvement of the Security Council to be intrusive or an encroachment into what is essentially African turf. I raise this question nevertheless because sometimes, when we talk informally, these issues have been raised by some of my colleagues. I should particularly like to belabour the point about selectivity and double standards. There is a clear such perception by African countries — and I am sure they would vouch for that — and certainly from the perspective of Asia there is such an impression, or perhaps misimpression. I therefore think it is important for the Council to disabuse them of this notion that selectivity and double standards are in fact involved.

I think you, Sir, and others have mentioned the question of greater interaction between the two organizations. There have been high-level contacts, of course, between the Secretaries-General. They meet on a regular basis; they talk to each other. We have, for instance, proposed many a time that the Secretary-General of the OAU come to address our Council. I am sure Mr. Annan has addressed the OAU, but I think it would be useful for us to get Mr. Salim to come and participate in these meetings of the Council to in fact clarify some of the points that I and others have raised in the process of our debates here and also in other informal discussions that we have had.

I think it is important to have an understanding of the complementarity of functions between the two

organizations. I should like, for instance, to ask the question: When we farm out certain aspects of either peacekeeping, peacemaking or the prevention of conflicts to the OAU, is it a division of labour or is it perceived as a dereliction of our duties and an abdication of responsibility? I think these are the questions that could be discussed here and in future meetings.

I have a couple of other questions, but my time is running out. All I should like to do here is to welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of our former colleague and former Permanent Representative of Nigeria, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, as his Adviser for Special Assignments in Africa. We believe that, given his long experience here, including his stint in the Council, he will contribute tremendously to this greater interaction and cooperation between the Organization and the OAU. I think it was a commendable selection by the Secretary-General and we welcome it.

The President: I would congratulate the Permanent Representative of Malaysia on his concept of the "note-less ambassador", which is an admirable novelty for the Security Council. I am sure the Secretary-General will take note of it, as he is about to leave for other important business.

Mr. Al-Dosari (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, may I express my pleasure at seeing you, Sir, preside over the work of the Security Council despite your very busy schedule. I should like to thank your country's delegation for its excellent choice in submitting the issue before us for open debate.

The problems, troubles and questions that plague the African continent deserve in-depth consideration. We hope that this meeting will afford us a good opportunity to exchange views on African issues and to activate the role of the United Nations in Africa.

Africans often feel themselves ignored by the United Nations; we sympathize strongly with the feelings of our brothers on that continent. We also hope that today's meeting will have a positive impact on the real situation in Africa. I should also like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his important introductory statement.

As everyone knows, African issues constitute more than 50 per cent of the total number of items on the Security Council's agenda. In our view, this requires the allocation of greater attention to African countries and prompts us to consider ways to improve the working methods of the Security Council in particular, and the United Nations in general, in Africa. In this context, we wish to share the following thoughts and observations with other Council members and with the wider United Nations membership.

First, coordination and cooperation between the Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) must be strengthened and increased. This will require greater transparency in the Council's work. In considering African issues, it might be appropriate for the Council to invite the parties to a conflict to participate in its deliberations and for it to listen to their points of view and attempt to reconcile them. Furthermore, the participation of the Secretary-General of the OAU in some Council deliberations on Africa would also be very significant. We believe that, in the absence of such transparency in its work, it will be difficult for the Council to play an effective role in the settlement of conflicts in Africa.

Secondly, recognizing that the root causes of many African problems and issues are economic, it may be necessary to intensify consultation and cooperation between the Security Council, on the one hand, and the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations specialized agencies, on the other, in seeking radical solutions to these problems. In this context, we must recall the vast resources and wealth that are available in Africa, but which, for many reasons, are poorly and improperly exploited. The United Nations could assist in overcoming these obstacles.

Thirdly, if the Security Council were to speed up its decisions on establishing United Nations peacekeeping missions when required, and also speed up their deployment, we believe that the Council could send military observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this context, we could also consider the possibility of establishing a permanent trust fund with a limited budget that would cover the initial deployment of African missions, particularly in emergency situations, until the competent United Nations bodies had the opportunity to consider a budget for such missions. This would accelerate the deployment of forces and the maintenance of peace and security in the relevant country. However, the trust fund should not be an alternative to the peacekeeping budget.

Fourthly, there is a need for a continued United Nations presence in the relevant African countries in the post-conflict era in the form of high United Nations

officials, or in any other form the Council deems appropriate, in order to maintain the peace achieved through such peacekeeping missions.

In conclusion, we support the practical steps proposed by the Secretary-General and believe that if these steps were implemented effectively, they would contribute greatly to resolving the problems of the African continent and would prevent the eruption of new armed conflicts there. We hope the Security Council will take specific, practical measures to complement the Secretary-General's proposals and will formulate them in a legal framework so that there will be a binding commitment to implement them.

The President: I thank the representative of Bahrain for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon)(*spoke in French*): Mr. President, this morning's debate attests to the concern that your country has always shown for the problems affecting Africa, as well as the Security Council's concern to enhance the quality of its interventions in crisis situations in Africa. Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, on regional agreements and arrangements, establishes the legal framework for cooperation involving the United Nations and its agencies. The areas of cooperation being considered here are those that fall within the purview of the Security Council, as they are related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Since the adoption of the Agreement of 15 November 1965 between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was updated in October 1990 by the Secretaries-General of the two organizations, a number of other agreements have been added to strengthen that cooperation.

The diagnosis of the ills besetting Africa is familiar to all of us. What we need to seek are the solutions. We wish to pay a tribute to the United Nations Secretariat, which has spared no effort to translate its cooperation agreements with the OAU into practical action. This is attested to by the holding of various meetings between the United Nations and African regional organizations, the exchange of personnel and training programmes to facilitate African countries' participation in peacekeeping operations.

Security Council resolution 1197 (1998) of 18 September 1998 and the presidential statement issued by the Security Council as document S/PRST/1998/28 set forth specific measures that, if wisely implemented, would have a real impact on conflict prevention and conflict resolution in Africa, and would considerably enhance the level of cooperation between the United Nations and the African organizations.

Those two documents emphasize, *inter alia*, the need for the appointment of joint envoys of the OAU and the United Nations, the need to strengthen and use the United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa, the need to develop OAU early warning systems and the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and the need to support regional organizations to help them acquire the logistics and financing necessary for peacekeeping operations.

This issue remains critical to Africa. Given the hesitation of the Security Council to commit itself quickly to help extinguish hot spots in Africa, African countries are increasingly driven to undertake many peacekeeping missions that are very costly. They need more material, financial and logistical support to effectively carry out their tasks.

The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group faced enormous difficulties in Sierra Leone due not to a shortage of troops, which were supplied by the ECOWAS countries, but to a shortage of logistics and financing.

The Security Council must end the practice of procrastination in the implementation of peacekeeping missions in Africa.

The imperatives of peace and stability should prevail over all other considerations. It would therefore be beneficial to avoid creating a gap between the signing of a peace agreement and the implementation of a peacekeeping mission so as not to allow the parties an opportunity to resume hostilities. We have in mind the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As Ambassador Holbrooke mentioned earlier, we will be having a meeting on the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo tomorrow.

We have spoken of support for the development of early warning mechanisms that the African regional and subregional organizations have established. These systems are effective means of conflict prevention provided that they are endowed with the necessary financial means and that the cooperation of all and rapid response are

ensured, particularly regarding the exchange of information on the risks of potential conflicts.

Conflict prevention also means ensuring respect for arms embargoes, mainly with regard to light weapons. A number of studies and resolutions, including Security Council resolution 1196 (1998), already exist. It would be beneficial to implement them and to act vigorously in case their provisions are violated.

Dispatching Security Council missions to Africa should be considered on a case-by-case basis. The general use of that practice could undermine the rapid response expected of the Security Council to help end these conflicts. The East Timor model cannot be indiscriminately applied in African situations.

In conclusion, what is important today is to implement already existing measures by providing the necessary resources and logistical support.

We welcome the recent appointment of Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari to assist the Secretary-General, which, as the Ambassador of Malaysia has rightly pointed out, is a good initiative that should serve to give a new impetus to our consideration of African questions.

The President: In the Ambassador of Gabon's remarks about procrastination over peacekeeping, I am sure he strikes a chord throughout Africa, speaking, as he does, on behalf of the Governments of Africa.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): The Gambian delegation is extremely grateful to the United Kingdom delegation for reserving a slot devoted to Africa in the Council's programme of work for this month. We are also honoured to see you, Mr. President, a son of Africa, presiding over today's meeting. There could not have been a more suitable person than you to do so.

Having read some of the statements that you made recently on Africa, we are honoured to have you with us. I would like to thank Sir Jeremy for making those statements available to me. Once one starts reading them, one cannot stop; and I soon developed a voracious appetite for more.

My delegation is also grateful to the Secretary-General for leading the discussions and for his thought-provoking remarks. His landmark report, "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (S/1998/318) led to the adoption of very important resolutions incorporating the issues that are being discussed today; we will come back to them later.

My delegation could not have agreed more with you, Mr. Minister, when on two occasions you stated that Africa still suffers from international policy neglect. You went on to state that Africa had been manipulated by both sides through proxy wars and client states during the cold war, at whose end both West and East virtually turned their backs.

We are heartened to note, however, that the United Kingdom, as well as the United States, following Ambassador Holbrooke's visit to Africa, will support the African renaissance. We are even more encouraged by the United Kingdom Government's renewed commitment to Africa. Here again,

> "Britain will continue to play an active role as a friend of Africa in the Security Council. And when United Nations action can stop war or build peace, we will back it to the hilt".

Now let us get down to business, starting with the question of how to improve coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the key subregional organizations, including coordination of joint activity on specific issues. As we pointed out earlier, the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict in Africa gave rise to the adoption of three very important resolutions and some presidential statements. The first of these was Security Council resolution 1197 (1998) of 18 September, on the strengthening of coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the area of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace. The second was resolution 1196 (1998) of 16 September, on arms embargoes, and the third was resolution 1209 (1998) of 19 November 1998 on the illicit transfer and accumulation of small arms in Africa.

We can see from these few examples that the legal framework is already in place to improve coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU. The Cooperation Agreement between the OAU and the United Nations offers many possibilities, but to be more focused one can cite the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. There are other means as well, such as through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping

in Africa — though, as colleagues have said, it is not enough to rely only on trust funds — and indeed the OAU Peace Fund, and the establishment of a Council of Elders within the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

With the establishment of a United Nations Preventive Action Liaison Office in the OAU, Security Council resolution 1197 (1998) called on the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of making the Office more effective, as well as the possibility of appointing liaison officers to peacekeeping operations of the OAU and of subregional organizations in Africa that are authorized by the Council. Another possibility is encouraging the nomination of joint special representatives. Security Council resolution 1197 (1998) also invited the Secretary-General to, among other things, adopt measures for an improved flow of information between the United Nations and the OAU and between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Other measures could include exchanges of staff and arranging joint expert meetings on certain specific areas of early warning and prevention.

With regard to the other issue, of how to make needs for African peacekeeping more effective and in real time, we made reference to two presidential statements, use of the United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa and encouraging contributions to the OAU Peace Fund. The Secretary-General was also requested to assist the OAU and subregional organizations to establish logistics assessment teams through encouraging joint training and simulation exercises and seminars with African peacekeepers, thus helping Africa to develop peacekeeping capacity.

Thirdly, as to what additional instruments the Council can bring to bear to help solve and, where possible, prevent conflicts in Africa, we cited the control of the flow of arms into Africa. We all know that in this area no flights would leave any airfield in your countries without your intelligence officials knowing about it. If we can share this type of information — meaning that each time a cargo plane is leaving your airfield or a vessel leaving your seaports, you would then inform your counterparts in Africa — we may not be able to eliminate it on the spot, but we are certain that in the long run, we will be able to deal a deadly blow to this traffic. We can also encourage the adoption of legislation or other legal measures making the violation of arms embargoes a criminal offence.

Mr. President, I wish to conclude by quoting again from one of your statements, this time when you addressed the "Challenges for governance in Africa" conference on 13 September 1999, in which you said,

> "Yet, common humanitarianism aside, the success of Africa is vital to Western interests. Its success could create a much safer, more environmentally sustainable world. It would reduce aid budgets and the United Nations budget. It would open up new markets and would remove havens for terrorism that will increasingly threaten the West".

The President: Thank you very much, Ambassador. After you so fulsomely praised my speeches and quoted from them, what else can I do but to fulsomely thank you and congratulate you on your excellent judgement. May I apologize also for wrongly pronouncing your name.

I would also like to commend you on your frankness and say that I very much agree with the points you made about different agencies sharing intelligence and making sure that that is available to target and track down those who are breaking United Nations sanctions illegally. In the case of Angola, that is especially relevant.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation)(*spoke in Russian*): The problems of Africa are a constant focus of attention in the United Nations Security Council, and this reflects the serious concern of the international community over the situation in the African continent.

We can hardly count on long-term harmonious development of the world if African States, which make up almost one third of the international community, continue to find themselves in a political and socio-economic "earthquake zone".

Today's Security Council meeting is a reaffirmation of the fact that we all understand the pressing need to have a coordinated strategy for maintaining peace and stability on the African continent and for settling and preventing armed conflicts there as they arise.

There can be no doubt that a key role in this matter belongs to Africans themselves. We note with satisfaction the activation of the peacekeeping efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and of such subregional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). In a

number of cases, this has enabled us to achieve important positive steps in the settlement of conflicts. These efforts must be fully strengthened by the authority and capacities of the United Nations. In this connection we should talk not about replacing African efforts but about the complementarity of cooperation, coordination and assistance on the part of the United Nations in establishing African peacekeeping machinery.

One of the key components of the strategy for strengthening peace in Africa must be the promotion by the United Nations of the establishment of an effective pan-African system which is geared to both prevent and settle conflicts and also to a comprehensive solution to the task of post-conflict rehabilitation. For this we need coordinated action on the part of various bodies and agencies of the United Nations system. One of the real opportunities for establishing such work is the application of Article 65 of the Charter on cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

We support the steps by the Secretary-General to expand relations between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in preventing and settling conflicts. These steps help to activate the implementation in the African region of concrete peace initiatives including, recently, those pertaining to conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

A significant potential is available to the United Nations in the area of mobilizing international donor support for African peacekeeping. An example of this is the establishment of a trust fund for enhancing preparedness for conflict-prevention activities in Africa.

An important area in cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in developing peacemaking potential is, we feel, the programme to exchange personnel and information and to train staff.

We propose that we should together think about how we can strengthen the role of African regional organizations — first and foremost the OAU — in peacemaking. We note the major importance of the fact that peacemaking activities for such organizations must be based in full compliance with the United Nations Charter. No enforcement measures — neither sanctions nor, even more importantly, military force — should be undertaken by regional structures without the authorization of the Security Council. In turn, the Security Council could rely more on the joint views of Africans themselves in seeking ways to solve various problems on the continent.

The holding of open meetings of the Security Council on Africa, such as today's, will help to reaffirm precisely such an approach. We are open to other forms of cooperation of the Council with interested States and organizations in order to promote finding an adequate reaction on the part of the Council to specific conflicts. The existing rules of procedure give us enough opportunities for this.

Russia approaches problems of cooperation in Africa and with Africa from a position of open-mindedness, equity and mutually advantageous partnership without being didactic, without ideological stereotypes and without national narrow-mindedness. From this standpoint we are prepared to take part in international promotion of the establishment of the peacekeeping potential of Africa, with the understanding, of course, that outside assistance in this area should be in addition to, and should not replace, steps taken by African States themselves.

The President: Thank you very much for setting an example by your succinct brevity.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I find myself in the same position as my colleague from Malaysia. I too fall into the same category of "note-less Ambassador" that you, Mr. President, have created, but I think I am a conscientious one. I would say that, after hearing so many statements, my delegation has little left to say about specific aspects of the problem that you have proposed for our consideration.

I think that the point concerning instruments that can strengthen peacekeeping operations in Africa was well addressed by my colleagues and, as Ambassador Fowler said, these instruments are known to us.

The base on which we should act is also known to us, and there are no surprises in what we have heard today. There is some consensus concerning the direction in which we should move. The fact that the instruments are known does not solve the problems of peace in Africa, and on this point I should like to make two comments.

First, reference has been made to the fact that one of the things lacking in Africa to make those instruments effective is political will. Political will is a very abstract entity which at times works almost like a magic solution

for very complex problems. We know how difficult it is to create political will. There is a history of frustration with regard to peace operations in Africa precisely because of the difficulty of building such political will.

The other problem that I wanted to touch on is the fact that though we may be familiar with the instruments, the big problem is how to adapt them to specific crises, because every crisis, every conflict in Africa has its own dynamics, its own logic, and we have to be able to calibrate the instruments to match the conflict. That, too, is a very delicate and difficult political issue.

Having made these two general comments, I wish now to touch on more specific matters that have to do with the questions that you, Mr. President, have posed.

With regard to the cooperation between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Security Council, I believe that the questions raised by my colleague from Malaysia are also very pertinent. They are not new; we have discussed them very often. I wonder why could they not be answered and resolved in a quick and immediate fashion — something that I think is in part the fault of the Council, because our procedures are often too formal. The time, the natural forum for responding to questions such as these, a more open, more frank debate, is informal consultations, but I do not believe that the Secretary-General of an organization such as the OAU has ever been invited to such consultations. So in part it is our fault that there are difficulties in creating informal procedures to resolve this kind of question.

On the question of instruments, may I just touch on one of the instruments that we do have, namely sanctions, and I will draw on the example of sanctions against UNITA. Clearly Ambassador Fowler's work has been recognized by us all as extremely important. I think that is a curious case because even before he completed his work, we were already feeling that the effects of the sanctions had changed, that they had become more effective. I think this has a lot to do with his personality, with his leadership, with the strength that he brought to bear on this work, but it also has to do — and this is very important — with the changing political atmosphere regarding UNITA; a tendency to strip UNITA of legitimacy, not only in the eyes of Africa but also in the eyes of important actors in the Western world.

I am going to follow the example of the Ambassador of Gambia and mention you, Mr. President. You have said some weighty things about Mr. Savimbi.

(spoke in English)

> "Savimbi was the West's creature. Savimbi — the blood of hundreds of thousands of Angolans drips from his hands".

(spoke in Spanish)

These are very serious things that we didn't hear about some of those involved in the Angola problem a few years ago. This is something new that has helped create the political atmosphere that allowed the work of Ambassador Fowler to have the impact it has had.

Finally, I would like make a comment with regard to something that I believe Ambassador Petrella has mentioned and that has to do with the complex nature of the roots of African conflicts.

I was very struck by what Ambassador Holbrooke said on the question of AIDS. I think that was the first time I heard it said that AIDS could have repercussions on security. As we all know, AIDS is traditionally dealt with as an epidemiological issue. The natural forum to deal with the AIDS problem is not the Security Council, but the World Health Organization. But I think that we can admit that there is a deep truth to what he said. I do not know precisely what the relationship between the problem of AIDS and security is, but I believe we can acknowledge that it is at least something we should think about.

So what is the implication of this? The implication is very simple: in order to address the problems of conflict and crises in Africa, we need to move beyond the Security Council. I think that this is the natural and necessary conclusion to be drawn from the kind of observation made by Ambassador Holbrooke. The problem is how to do this. How can activities be coordinated, and even more than activities, how can a coordinated diagnosis be arrived at that will include not only specific political and security aspects, but also the economic, social and other aspects that have to do with health conditions in Africa.

The President: Could I say how much I appreciated the style in which you proceeded to intervene in this debate, Mr. Ambassador. This practice of a note-less ambassador is obviously catching. I appreciated in particular the way in which you related to the other points that have been made in the debate, which I think helps us move forward.

May I also say that your comments on looking at more informal procedures in the relationship between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity, and Africa in general, are very interesting. We ought to look at that more carefully.

I would just, perhaps, finally say in response that I have always found my civil servants extremely nervous when I appear note-less at meetings, because they think I might say what I actually believe.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): We commend your delegation, Mr. President, for organizing this very important meeting.

Let me also welcome back from Africa my colleague and friend, Ambassador Holbrooke. We look forward to discussing in more detail the findings of his trip.

With the Security Council at risk of gradually losing credibility in Africa, there is a need, *inter alia*, for innovation in addressing African issues. You have given us, Mr. President, three elements to discuss, and I shall address them briefly and as candidly as I can. Let me start with the question of how to meet the needs of African peacekeeping more effectively.

The members of the Security Council should separate their national interests from the needs of those affected by conflict. Peacekeeping operations in Africa should not be treated differently from those in other parts of the world. The size and mandate of peacekeeping operations should be dictated by the magnitude of the conflict, and not by geographical location. Of course, I have taken note of what my neighbour to my left said before me.

When a peacekeeping operation is anticipated, the Council should make advance preparations to that end. The Secretary-General and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be viewed as complementary to the work of the Council. The efforts of the Secretary-General should be supported. The Security Council and the Secretary-General are not in competition.

In addition, timely action by the Council and the international community is a must if we are serious about conflict prevention. We cannot overemphasize the importance of timely intervention in order to avoid the escalation of conflicts. This requires Council members to exercise the necessary political will — and I would like to underline necessary political will — and for all Member States to provide such intervention with the required resources, be they human, material or financial. Of course, trust funds are helpful. But we believe they should not replace regular funding.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, if decisive action had been taken at the beginning of the conflict, we would not be faced with the massive human suffering being experienced in that country today. Even now that it is evidently clear what the real causes of that conflict are, there is still a lot of hesitation, foot-dragging and lack of political will from some quarters. We can continue to express concern about the humanitarian situation and find excuses for inaction, but we are all aware that the situation will deteriorate further. We must find the ways to pursue our national interests. The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a test case for the Security Council. Words alone will not work; they will not help. What we should do is act — and act now.

The United Nations needs to support financially and logistically operations initiated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In the absence of that flexibility, the situation will continue to deteriorate.

When Africa speaks to ask for help, the Security Council should listen. One of the effective ways to achieve that is through coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU subregional organizations. In our view, the level of information between the United Nations and the OAU on conflict situations is not always even. Therefore, it would always be of help if the Council could benefit from direct exchanges of views with representatives of the OAU.

In this connection, we support the proposal made by the Secretary-General that the Security Council should hold a meeting in Africa at the appropriate time. This proposal should be further explored by the Council.

In addition, we know that through cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU a mechanism has been established whereby regular meetings are held between the United Nations Secretariat and the OAU, including on issues of peace and security. From the viewpoint of the OAU, can the Security Council benefit from the outcome of such discussions?

Furthermore, cooperation with subregional organizations should be enhanced. Subregional organizations need support. In this connection, we also agree with your idea, Mr. President, that the Security

Council should consider sending a mission to the region to address the problems there.

On the additional steps that the Council can take to help solve, and even prevent, conflict, let me say that, while acting within the provisions of the Charter, the Council should make use of the good offices of the Secretary-General; for example, when his special envoys are sent to visit conflict situations in potential trouble spots. In this respect, the services of eminent African personalities should be enlisted.

In the end, it is the political will that I talked about earlier, on all of our parts, which will help to put an end to conflict in Africa. We must send a clear message to rebel movements in Africa and to their supporters that we have made enough noise and that now we mean business. It is time for us to take action.

Here I agree with what you said, Mr. President, and with what Ambassador Fowler said with regard to Angola. That situation has been going on for a long time. UNITA is there and is getting support from Member States of this Organization — Member States that are supposed to ensure the full implementation of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council. If there is a need, and I am sure there is, those who support UNITA must be exposed and shamed. We look forward to the report by the panels in February, and we hope that the Council will take appropriate steps in this regard.

Finally, let me thank you, Mr. President, as a fellow son of Africa, for presiding over this very important meeting. Your presence here testifies to your personal commitment and that of your country to Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Namibia for his kind personal words.

I very much agree with the point the representative made about Member States' complicity in the continuing Angolan conflict, because Savimbi and UNITA's arms, munitions and fuel come through or over neighbouring States and from other Member States. If they did not, he would not have any supplies and the war would end.

Mr. Žbogar (Slovenia): Slovenia appreciates the leadership of the United Kingdom in the convening of this action-oriented open debate today on the United Nations partnership with Africa. We believe that the Security Council should be innovative in searching for ways to address better the responsibilities conferred on it by the Charter in this constantly changing international environment.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his analysis of the challenges which face the United Nations in Africa. His analysis and recommendations provide valuable insights and show that the problems of Africa are very much at the centre of attention and action of the Secretary-General.

The Security Council in turn has been giving much of its attention to specific situations in Africa and at the same time has tried to establish the necessary conceptual framework for its own future action. Much of that work was accomplished in the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council, chaired by the Ambassador of Gabon, and the Security Council also affirmed its willingness to act at the recent 29 and 30 September open debate on the situation in Africa.

Despite all the work that has been done so far, there is no doubt that further action is necessary. It is especially important to improve inter-institutional cooperation, in particular the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the key subregional organizations, as several speakers have already mentioned.

The Security Council is consistently supporting the efforts of the OAU and the subregional organizations and is prepared to enhance the effectiveness of that support. A good example of this preparedness is the recent deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Sierra Leone. This deployment is important for a number of reasons, including symbolic ones. As recently as several years ago Sierra Leone was being used as a prime example of the so-called coming anarchy in the world and as an excuse for the complacency of the international community in addressing African crises.

The current successful cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) therefore goes a long way in dispelling what the Secretary-General referred to as "Afro-pessimism" in his progress report on Africa.

Another area where the Security Council needs to engage in further specific action relates to sanctions. It is indicative of the tragedy of Africa that the majority of sanctions imposed by the Security Council have been directed against Member States or specific groups in Africa. We especially support efforts aimed at improving

the implementation of arms embargoes and stemming illicit arms flows to and within Africa.

In this connection, we would like to recognize the indefatigable efforts of Ambassador Robert Fowler of Canada to facilitate a political solution of the Angolan crisis by limiting the ability of UNITA to pursue the war option. We believe that Ambassador Fowler's initiatives, including the establishment of the experts' panels, provide important innovations for the Council's method of work and could be used in the work of other sanctions committees on situations in Africa.

Lastly, we would like to refer to the presidential statement on the prevention of armed conflict that the Security Council adopted just recently and which is still very fresh in our minds. Several delegations referred earlier to the need for prevention, and we would like to emphasize three elements of that statement.

First, the Security Council recognized that early warning, preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment, preventive disarmament and post-conflict peace-building are interdependent and complementary components of a comprehensive conflict-prevention strategy.

Secondly, periodic reports were requested from the Secretary-General on disputes that may endanger international peace and security, including early warnings and proposals for preventive measures.

Thirdly, the important role of regional organizations in the prevention of armed conflict was welcomed, as were the meetings between the United Nations, including the Security Council, and regional organizations.

We believe the Security Council could take a first step in the implementation of those elements of the statement in the case of Africa. We propose, for the consideration of the Security Council, to request from the Secretary-General his first periodic regional early warning report on Africa. Once it receives the report, the Security Council could engage in a dialogue with the OAU and key subregional organizations, possibly in Africa, on the substance of the report and on the recommendations contained therein. The Security Council would then subsequently have to seriously consider which of a wide range of preventive measures would best suit specific situations.

The problems of peace in Africa require constant attention. The current action-oriented open debate is an important phase in that process. The Security Council should not only be able to offer vision in addressing the underlying causes of conflict in Africa, but also demonstrate the ability to address specific crisis situations in Africa effectively.

The President: I should like to thank Security Council members for entering into the spirit of brevity that we have tried to foster and to suggest that they have provided good examples for non-Council members. I will try to expedite the introductory formalities, so non-Council members may wish to be ready to speak very quickly after their predecessor has spoken.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): It is a very pleasant duty for me, Sir, to congratulate you on the unprecedented initiative you have taken today. Despite the fact that our statements have been limited to five minutes per delegation, it shows the importance that your country, and you personally, attach to Africa and its recovery.

Whenever we hold a debate on Africa, Algeria, as an African State and a member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), feels compelled to express once again its frustrations vis-à-vis the Council, whose attitude has in recent months has, unfortunately, been characterized by a lack of interest — even enthusiasm — with regard to African issues, although during that same period it showed remarkable speed and great determination in deploying operations in other regions of the world.

African States therefore welcome the holding of this meeting which we hope, far from being an exercise in ritual speech-making, will respond to their concerns and expectations through the establishment of a genuine partnership that goes beyond words and good intentions. For us, that means effective cooperation and the full participation of Africa through the involvement of the chairmanship of the OAU and of the African Group, whose opinions and concerns should be taken into account.

For several years Africa has accorded priority to strengthening its ability to prevent, manage and resolve conflict, and the OAU has become fully involved in many parts of the continent, as was shown at its recent summit, held in July 1999 in Algiers. The fact that Africa has

decided to take control and fully to assume its responsibilities does not mean that the international community — the United Nations and, especially, the Security Council, which the Charter has given responsibility for maintaining international peace and security — is relieved of its obligations to Africa. This is particularly important, as the United Nations has acquired unquestionable experience and expertise in peacekeeping, and it would be regrettable if we were not able to benefit from it. That is why Africa has always called for the establishment of close and fruitful cooperation with this body.

One of the key areas where it is possible to develop a special relationship between the Council and other parts of the United Nations with regard to conflicts in Africa is that of peacekeeping, where, because of its knowledge of African problems and its experience, which has been proved in the field, the OAU is in a position to contribute to the resolution of conflicts. The Security Council, for its part, can lend its support to the efforts of both the chairmanship of the OAU and African States through subregional organizations or at the bilateral level.

From that standpoint, the proposal of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to set up a working group to strengthen the African capacity for peacekeeping was warmly welcomed by African delegations, since its objective is to support, in particular, the activity of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, to enable African countries to benefit from logistic and financial support and to develop their peacekeeping capacities. In August 1999 the African Group submitted its own proposals in this regard, and it is still awaiting a response. The establishment of such a group would, without undoubtedly contribute to the development of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU in this essential area, and to building a genuine partnership.

We believe that for such a partnership to be viable and workable it should be based on regular and constant coordination between the Security Council, on the one hand, and on the other, the Secretary-General of the OAU, the current Chairman of the OAU and the Office of the Permanent Observer for the OAU to the United Nations, as well as the chairmanship of the African Group. The Council would then be able to obtain the views and opinions of the Organization of African Unity on the best way to deal with a given situation. My delegation supports your proposal, Mr. President, to create a mechanism to enable the Council and the OAU to work together. The United Nations liaison office at OAU headquarters, which was set up in 1998, is in the process of playing a useful and effective coordinating role. We believe that it should be further strengthened.

In the same context, preventive action by the Council should be further strengthened, as was clearly affirmed during the meeting on 29 November. In this regard, we should point out that in order to be effective, and to benefit from the necessary legitimacy, any United Nations initiative to prevent conflict on the continent should be taken in accordance with the principles of the Charter, especially that of respecting the sovereignty of States. The adherence to those principles of the protagonists and parties to a conflict is indispensable for the success of any action taken in this regard. Indeed, in such cases, as in any conflict prevention or peacekeeping operation, the consent of the State concerned and hence its cooperation are absolutely necessary. That principle also applies to all situations in which it might be necessary to provide humanitarian assistance.

We believe that the prompt reaction of the Security Council to conflict situations in the African continent is crucial. The Security Council must, in fact, be able to react rapidly and effectively to peacekeeping problems in Africa. To that end, the Council should respond to peace agreements concluded in Africa by the early deployment of observer or peacekeeping missions. That is a key element. In this regard, we recall the events surrounding the adoption of the draft resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which, in the end, did not authorize the deployment recommended by the Secretary-General.

Particular attention should be given to the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, which feed conflict situations.

Another issue which we believe is particularly important is the problem of resources. Recent experience has shown their influence and impact on the dependability of the peace processes and on post-conflict peace-building. In this regard, the proposal to establish a special United Nations trust fund for Africa deserves close attention. Such a fund could provide regular assistance for OAU conflict-prevention activities, as well as finance programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants during peacekeeping operations. Innovative means of financing could be sought, as could new ways and means to further mobilize the donor community.

Those are a few of the proposals which the chairmanship of the OAU wishes to make at this stage of the debate. We hope that, thanks to this debate, the Council will be able to contribute to the development of a genuine partnership for peace in Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Algeria for his kind words addressed to me. I believe that the role of the chairmanship of the OAU, which is currently held by Algeria, is absolutely crucial, and the constructive leadership that it can give to making this relationship better will be very valuable indeed.

The next speaker is the representative of Cameroon. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I should like, on behalf of the African Group, to commend you, Mr. President, for taking this initiative, which is promising in more than one respect. It is taking place in the wake of the debate in the General Assembly on 8 December on the report of the Secretary-General on Africa. It is also ensuring that Africa remains at the centre of the agenda of the Security Council.

It is true that the problems of African countries have been and are being discussed in the Council but, as you said, Sir, the results have been meagre and disappointing. Today a new vision is proposed, a global vision being proposed that recognizes Africa as a partner. That is important. The initiative of holding this interactive debate has the merit of giving the Security Council credibility in the eyes of the African people, inasmuch as we hope that it will mark the beginning of the end of the double standard of which we have often complained.

Africa is the region most sorely racked by armed conflict; that much is obvious. But that is not preordained by fate. No matter what, Africa rejects such a destiny and refuses to resign itself to such a situation. For that reason, each of the large subregions of the continent has set up or is setting up mechanisms designed specifically to prevent and settle conflicts.

This meeting was convened to discuss the partnership between the United Nations and Africa, which I shall do by posing a number of questions whose answers might seem self-evident. But it is sometimes interesting and valuable to repeat the obvious. We should ask, first of all, whether such a partnership is possible. If it is possible, the next question is in what spheres it is possible and how it should be established. Then we must address the point raised by the President: whether or not we need additional instruments to bolster this partnership.

As far as we are concerned, this partnership is not only possible; it is indispensable, for a number of reasons. The first is the vastness of Africa's wealth, which arouses considerable covetousness, which in turn is often a factor in conflict. Secondly, African problems have an impact on international peace and security. And thirdly, Africa's geopolitical weight is self-evident.

If partnership is essential and indispensable, what are the ideal areas for it? We see two main areas: the establishment of sustainable development and the establishment and maintenance of lasting peace. On 8 December, the General Assembly addressed the question of the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, but here in the Council we shall confine ourselves to the maintenance of peace. That involves the prevention of conflicts and, hence, such "upstream" activities as preventive diplomacy. It also involves the settlement of conflicts by "downstream" means such as the deployment of peacekeeping operations. If they are to be effective, all relevant Security Council activities must involve Africa; they must be undertaken with Africa's consent and must be deployed with its full cooperation. Hence the need to establish this partnership.

As a partner of the United Nations, Africa is an organized continent that possesses the mechanisms to which I have referred. Central Africa has its Council of Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX); West Africa has the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and ECOWAS has recently established a diplomatic and political mechanism for conflict management, the Security and Mediation Council; in southern Africa, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has an ad hoc structure responsible for peace and security; in East Africa, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development is working actively to find a solution to the conflict in the Horn of Africa. In addition to these subregional bodies, I should mention also the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

All these developments share the goal of demonstrating that Africa is a partner with the institutional capacity to respond to the provisions of Articles 52 and 53 of the United Nations Charter, which

encourage the regional settlement of conflicts. All of this is intended to stimulate joint action by these bodies and by the United Nations.

What additional instruments are needed? Essentially, we envisage two. First and foremost are financial instruments, which are vital both to strengthen the capacity of regional and subregional organizations to prevent and settle conflicts, and to support peace agreements. In other regions, the signature of a peace agreement is almost always accompanied with a financial arrangement to help in settling the problem in question. We believe that the same should hold for conflicts in Africa.

And secondly, we believe that the Security Council might begin thinking about the appointment of a coordinator for Africa to work with the Secretary-General. The coordinator would work to implement the provisions of Article 54 the Charter by providing an interface between the Secretary-General and African leaders, and would assist the Security Council and the General Assembly in carrying out the recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. That report outlines all courses of action and defines the responsibilities of the various parties concerned with a view to helping Africa, in a spirit of partnership, to move forward. All that is needed is tireless promotion of the implementation of those recommendations.

Let me conclude by recalling the words the Secretary-General spoke in this Chamber on 29 September 1999:

> "However imperfectly, Africans have provided many important signs of their own yearning for peace, stability and development and of their willingness to work for it. The right kind of support now, carefully directed to those best able to use it, could help Africans turn a corner and set the stage for a brighter future. Let us seize this moment." (*S/PV.4049, p. 5*)

It seems to me that that is the very essence and the very purpose of a partnership between the United Nations and Africa: to enable Africa to make a fresh start.

The President: Thank you very much indeed. While I invite the representative of South Africa to take a seat at the Council table, I hope the Security Council will forgive me if I say how especially delighted I am in doing so. If anybody had suggested during those long bitter years of struggle that either Ambassador Kumalo would be speaking for his country at the United Nations or that I would be representing, at a ministerial level, the British Government, I think they would have been described as either dreamers or mad. But here we are, and I am delighted to give the floor to the Ambassador from South Africa.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Thank you very, very much, Mr. President of this Council. Maybe it is true that we Africans are taking over; they just do not know how we are doing it. We will keep it a secret. Let me just say that when old wise women and old wise men sit down by an African tree and drink beer on a Saturday afternoon many years from now, and they look back at this century and think of the people who contributed to our struggle, I think your name will appear, though we would have loved you to be our minister.

When the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom started this idea, which is an incredible and novel idea, of communication, he said that he hoped we would come here without prepared statements and be able to engage in this interactive session. It is very difficult for me to write something for five minutes, so my remarks may be disjointed. I hope you will forgive me.

I was very struck that in one of the questions that is posed, the term "real time" was used. Now, to associate real time with the United Nations is very exciting, at the least, since it may be seldom real. What I would like to say to this meeting is very simple. I am not going to go through answering all the three questions. I am going to try to use "real time" as a guide.

There is one issue that to us, as Africans, is a fundamental test for this Council, and that is the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am very thankful that the Security Council has discussed Africa many, many times. Perhaps, now that we are at the end of the year, we need to look at all the discussions that you have had on Africa and review them to see if something concrete has come out of them. If it has, what is it? If not, how can we make it better? But we have to keep on coming to the situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If, God forbid, the Congo were to fall apart, it would not be an African failure; it would be an international failure.

The story of the Congo is very simple. The international community said to us as Africans, get your house in order, get involved, do something. Guess what? We did. We did. On 10 July the countries of southern Africa brought together all the combatants in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo — those inside, outside and everywhere — and came up with a peace treaty.

What has the Security Council done since 10 July? What has this body done? I think that is the question that needs to be answered. Yes, we have talked about it, but to the people in the Congo, it seems as if nothing has happened. Maybe the lot that we have done has to be concretized in a way that it can be real to the people of the Congo. All we did was come up with a peace treaty, and right now it is very fragile around the edges. But it is fragile like any peace. Even Kosovo, if you had left that situation for six months as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it would have been fragile too.

I think that is why I say that this is a situation where this body has to really think hard about what it is that we can do. The Africans formed the Joint Military Commission (JMC). Those who could provide transportation, like South Africa, did. We gave helicopters and what have you. Zambia has given more than anybody in promoting this peace. Where is the international community? Or more "real", where is the Security Council?

I am glad that we are discussing this issue. I am not going to address any of the other issues that are on the table because the litmus test is the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I am not saying "do in the Democratic Republic of the Congo what you did in Kosovo". I am not saying "do in the Democratic Republic of the Congo what you did in East Timor or in Sierra Leone". We are very thankful for what was done in those countries. The situation is not the same. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is different. One of every five countries in Africa is directly drawn into the Democratic Republic of the Congo. If you look at those who spend sleepless nights trying to be involved, the ratio is even less.

Let me conclude, because I said I was just going to come and make one point only. I am very pleased that we have talked all morning about working together with the Organization of African Unity. One practical thing that maybe the Security Council can do is to appeal to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and perhaps to the United States as the host country, to look at the situation of immunities and privileges for the office of the OAU in New York. My country has given a lot of help in strengthening the offices of the OAU, whether they be on the continent or here, but I think we can use help if there could be another real look, in a practical way, at what we can do here.

So, as far as my country is concerned, the test is very simple: it is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we are watching. We have been watching since 10 July.

The President: Can I say that I have heard some very noble suggestions in this debate, but setting up a transfer market for international ministerial changes is a noble one.

I very much agree with you that the litmus test for the Security Council is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we will be discussing that in detail tomorrow. Exceptionally, in this debate, I would like to call on Mr. Holbrooke to make a brief response to the South African Ambassador's contribution. He is quickly making his way back to the table.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I think I made a mistake by giving him a visa.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States): I want to praise you for your comments and I want to make one important explanation because, to a very considerable extent, we are part of the reason for this delay in the United Nations peacekeeping. I would just like to repeat to my dear friend from South Africa what I said to President Mbeki and President Mandela, President Mugabe, President Museveni and President Kabila on this issue, and to stress our country's situation.

It is true the Lusaka Agreement was signed on 10 July, and we will debate this in detail tomorrow, but it is either being ignored or violated in every significant provision. I want to reaffirm to you personally, as I did to your President, that our country will support peacekeeping. But we must get it right. Until a facilitator is chosen, until the Joint Military Commission, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations go in the direction which Ambassador Fonseca, Ambassador Qin, Ambassador Dejammet and others have stressed, toward the right relationship, we would be making a mistake which could be disastrous for the future of the United Nations and peacekeeping.

So I want to associate myself with your sentiments and explain to you — so that no one in this room thinks there is a real problem — that we will move in that direction. But we need to get it right. I speak only for the United States here, but that was the essence of the message I carried on behalf of our country to ten nations last week and which we will look forward to discussing

under the Presidency's direction in more detail tomorrow. I wanted to respond on that immediately so that there would be no misunderstanding between us and your great country and you, personally.

The President: Ambassador Kumalo, before you resume your seat do you want to respond briefly to that intervention?

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): No, Mr. President. I appreciate what I have heard.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Finland. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Rasi (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia — and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union welcomes the initiative by the United Kingdom and the possibility of participating in this important debate. We hope this new format will generate new approaches and visions of how to develop further the United Nations partnership with Africa.

The report (A/52/871) of the Secretary-General, "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" and the progress report (A/54/133) comprise important elements and strategies for conflict prevention. The European Union has sought to develop an active, comprehensive and integrated approach towards the issue of violent conflicts in Africa, an approach based, *inter alia*, on the 1997 Common Position and the European Council conclusions on conflict prevention and resolution in Africa.

The Security Council on a number of occasions, most recently on 30 November, has affirmed its willingness to act and to explore new means of advancing the objectives of peace and security.

The Security Council should, at an early stage, actively direct its attention to areas of potential conflict, including the regular holding of forward-looking discussions, and in this regard maintain a high degree of readiness to take preventive action. The United Nations Charter provides a number of tools which can and should be used in conflict prevention. We need to build on that and further develop them. Existing methods, such as those enumerated in Article 33 of the Charter, should be strengthened and complemented. Certain preventive measures, such as the establishment of demilitarized zones or preventive disarmament, belong also to the traditional inventory of means at the disposal of the Council. Regional and subregional organizations should be consulted and their expertise used when actions are being considered by the Council.

The European Union strongly believes that in the search for a long-term solution to conflicts, especially in Africa, high priority should be given to curbing arms supplies and the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as the use of trade in diamonds, gold and other precious materials to provide illicit finance for buying such armaments. The European Union encourages the Security Council to consider using its powers in a more decisive way to impose targeted sanctions, including arms embargoes, at the early stages of emerging crises. We also stress the importance of monitoring such embargoes after they have been imposed. In this context, the role of regional and subregional organizations, countries and even individuals cannot be underestimated.

The European Union supports the central role of the Secretary-General in preventive diplomacy, including fact-finding missions, good offices and other activities. We support the Secretary-General's efforts to improve the United Nations early-warning system and to place increased emphasis on preventive diplomacy. The Security Council also has an important role to play, and we encourage Council members to send fact-finding missions whenever possible.

We believe that the possibilities of the Secretary-General and his Secretariat are still not fully utilized. In this context, we wish to recall Article 99 of the Charter, which provides the Secretary-General with the possibility of bringing to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. For that purpose, the European Union considers that the Secretariat's capacity needs to be enhanced to enable the Security Council to conduct regular surveys of potential conflict areas. We encourage Member States and regional organizations to increasingly share early-warning information with the United Nations.

The European Union encourages the Security Council to decide, when the situation requires it, on the timely establishment of United Nations peacekeeping missions. In this regard, the European Union is concerned by the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We support the Secretary-General's recommendations and resolution 1279 (1999) on the next steps to be taken for a rapid deployment of United Nations observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The European Union affirms its readiness to support, in due time, a peacekeeping force to assist the parties in implementing the Lusaka Agreement.

The restoration of security and order, as well as the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration into society of former combatants, are vital. Since arms and combatants move easily across borders in most conflict areas, the Security Council should try to formulate mandates in such a manner that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes can take into consideration the regional context whenever possible.

The European Union welcomes with appreciation the increased role and contributions of civil society and non-governmental organizations in conflict prevention. The Security Council could also consider how these actors and their potential might be further utilized.

Strengthening coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organizations remains key. In order to meet those goals, both organizations need to exchange information on a regular basis. Furthermore, this should not be restricted to pure information exchange. Organizations need to share analyses about future developments in various fields.

The speedy availability of trained personnel and relevant equipment is the crucial factor in peacekeeping operations. In this context, Member States should be encouraged to conclude the United Nations standby arrangements. The European Union is ready to assist in building capacity for conflict prevention in Africa, particularly through the OAU and the subregional organizations. The Security Council could explore possible ways of supporting the OAU's conflict-management centre. The European Union looks forward to the next meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to share views on changing roles and capacities in the field of crisis management and conflict prevention.

One way to address conflict situations is to adopt clear benchmarks for parties to follow, including for mandate extensions of the phased deployment of peacekeeping missions. When progress is being made, the Security Council can act positively and consolidate achievements on the ground. This kind of positive engagement would create a climate conducive to further steps in the peace process.

I have tried to outline only a few points which, in our view, deserve further deliberation. However, we must not forget that the quest for peace and stability in Africa requires a long-term, comprehensive, concerted and determined approach encompassing various fields. The European Union also underlines the importance of political will in Africa and beyond. The primary responsibility for the future of Africa rests with the African nations themselves. However, through joint efforts and cooperation between the United Nations, African countries, regional and subregional organizations and other parties, important progress can be made. The European Union hopes that today's discussions and action-oriented approach will help us to turn a new page in the United Nations partnership with Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Finland for speaking on behalf of the European Union, whose presidency Finland has served with great distinction these last few months.

The next speaker is the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Babaa (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for presiding over the work of the Security Council and for this excellent and well-timed initiative, which we hope will prompt the Security Council to give serious attention to the problems of the African continent. I must also express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his practical proposals, which have provided a framework for this interactive debate.

The partnership between the United Nations and the international community in Africa must be an effective one based on equality, not on hegemony and exploitation. The causes of the problems of Africa are well known and documented in United Nations reports, prominent among which are those of the Secretary-General. What the continent and its peoples and countries really need is the mobilization of the material resources necessary to solve these problems.

African problems are common to all African countries. Among the most significant of these are the foreign-debt crisis, poverty, illiteracy and disease, in particular HIV/AIDS. If poverty is a consequence of war, war is also a consequence of poverty. Hence, the eradication of poverty is one of the best ways to eliminate one of the major causes of conflict in Africa. If these problems are to be solved, vast financial and human resources must be made available. Without such resources, statements about the United Nations partnership with Africa will remain empty rhetoric that cannot be implemented, regardless of any resolutions or initiatives the Council may adopt.

It has therefore become important to establish a United Nations fund for financing African development and reconstruction, and to promote effective coordination between all the various international and regional agencies, United Nations specialized agencies and financial institutions working in Africa. In this context, I wish to stress the special responsibility of the countries that colonized and exploited the continent for many decades. They are obligated to pay compensation for their lengthy exploitation of the peoples of the continent and must contribute generously to the proposed fund. We must also enable Africa to obtain fair prices for its raw materials, imported very cheaply by the industrialized countries. Africa is also entitled to have an increase in the rates of its raw materials equivalent to the price rates for imported manufactured goods.

I turn now to the role of the Security Council. The Council can play an important role in establishing stability and peace in Africa by supporting efforts and implementing resolutions agreed upon by Africans themselves in order to achieve peace, settle current conflicts and prevent their resumption. Such measures include the following:

First, it must provide political support by adopting resolutions promoting the initiatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and subregional organizations. The Council has assumed this role but with unnecessary hesitation and caution.

Secondly, it must provide financial and human support for African peacekeeping operations, which should, in fact, be fully financed. As regional and international peacekeeping operations, they should be the responsibility of the United Nations, the Security Council in particular.

Thirdly, it must provide and finance peacekeeping training for African States so as to strengthen their capacities in that field. Such training should not be relegated to bilateral relations.

Fourthly, it must support the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, pursue consultations with the OAU on settling conflicts in Africa and support its initiatives and efforts to settle disputes, both physically and morally.

Fifthly, it must be prepared to face many risks and obstacles. The United Nations, the international community in general and donor countries should be willing to accept a minimum level of risk. The United Nations cannot wait for peace to be achieved in any given region before it participates through missions and forces. A United Nations intervention at that stage would be meaningless. Why are we still waiting for forces to be deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo? Is the Security Council waiting for peace to reign there before approving the deployment of United Nations forces, or for the re-emergence of conflict there?

Sixthly, in addressing African conflicts, it must employ the same means and standards it uses to settle disputes in other continents, such as Europe and Asia. Why has the United Nations allowed Somalia to burn and tear itself apart without any intervention other than the issuance of occasional statements?

It is very important to send peacekeeping operations to Africa, but the Security Council's members should occasionally go to Africa themselves and hold their meetings in proximity to the conflict regions in order to gain a clearer understanding of the various dimensions and aspects of the problems of the African continent. The peoples of Africa look up to the Council in the hope that it will now adopt decisive resolutions that eschew limited national interests and that can truly solve the continent's problems, maintain its peace and security and foster its economic development and prosperity. If the Council does so, it will help Africa emerge from its dilemma and give the best gift to the peoples of that continent: hope for the next century.

I thank you once again, Sir, for convening this meeting. The contribution of the United Nations and the Security Council to settling African conflicts and solving African problems requires a change in perceptions of Africa, an improvement in the traditional methods and the adoption of new ones.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of the Republic of Korea. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Lee See-young (Republic of Korea): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiative of arranging today's open debate devoted to Africa, to which my Government attaches particular importance.

We wholeheartedly welcome the Council's renewed and sustained attention to the problems facing Africa, as demonstrated in its holding of a series of special sessions: one in September, another today and probably more than one next month. We also appreciate your innovative way of organizing today's discussion, by which you will doubtless lead our meeting to a fruitful conclusion.

Let me now put forward several concrete suggestions related to the subjects before us for elaboration by the Council.

First, we consider that there is an urgent need for the Council to involve itself more directly and effectively in crises situations in Africa. We all witnessed most dramatically the crucial role that the Council mission in East Timor played in reversing the dangerous situation there, enabling the Council and the parties directly concerned to work out successfully and expeditiously the arrangements so badly needed to bring the situation under control.

In our view, the Security Council might consider sending such missions more frequently to crisis areas, with the mandate of fact-finding and possibly of prevention or management of conflict situations or even of post-conflict peace-building in close collaboration with the Governments concerned, the Secretary-General and his representatives.

Secondly, the Council could also examine the possibility of setting up within the Council a special working unit, with whatever name, possibly with the following mandate: to continuously monitor and collect all relevant information, in close consultation with the countries involved, the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), other regional and subregional organizations and all relevant specialized agencies and United Nations organs involved in the situation; and to report to the Council, as necessary, on the conflict or potential conflict situations with assessments and recommendations.

Thirdly, I would suggest that the Council explore the possibility, as a long-term goal, of establishing a kind of regional centre for African peacekeeping operations, in cooperation with African Governments, the OAU and other organizations, with the purpose of upgrading peacekeeping capabilities in Africa. This centre might, among other things, monitor the situation within the region, detect early-warning signals of human rights violations and humanitarian crises, serve as a clearing-house for information gathering, provide professional training and help the Secretariat in making effective plans for rapid response, including logistical support planning.

Finally, there is a need to build Africa's own capacity in the area of rapid response to prevent conflicts or to contain and manage them. For these purposes, we suggest that training assistance and ongoing staff exchange programmes be further expanded and that standby arrangements also be extended to more African countries as soon as possible.

I sincerely hope that today's exchange of views and suggestions will produce substantive and practical results that ultimately will contribute to resolving many of the urgent problems facing Africa today.

The President: I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea. I might commend him on his brevity, which was also a feature of most of the speakers this morning.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.